Syfy rocks when it premieres its Original Movie STONEHENGE APOCALYPSE next month. The science-fiction thriller in which the ancient monoliths trigger horrific disasters all over the world was directed by Syfy stalwart Paul Ziller (SNAKEHEAD TERROR, SEA BEAST, YETI) and written by Ziller and Brad Abraham, the latter of whom spoke to Fango about the project and the Syfy development process.

Debuting Saturday, June 12 at 9 p.m., with an encore showing later that night at 1 a.m., STONEHENGE APOCALYPSE stars Misha Collins (Castiel on SUPERNATURAL) as a radio talk-show host trying to convince the world about the source of the cataclysms, and also features Peter Wingfield, Hill Harper and Torri Higginson. “It has elements of the supernatural, or super-science, but the emphasis is on action and mystery,” Abraham tells us. “It hits the gas pedal from the get-go and only relents to give you a chance to catch your breath. That’s pretty much the m.o. for these movies; they’re not rocket science, but they are intricately constructed, as I discovered. It was a real learning experience.”

When collaborating with Syfy on the project, he recalls, “I had a surprising amount of freedom, albeit to a point. The producers and I spent months working out the plot, the characters, trying different combinations and seeing what worked, and through that process we were able to construct a solid story. The producers actually encouraged me to ‘go big’ in the writing, with the knowledge we’d have to dial it back later, for budget and scheduling. These aren’t expensive movies by any stretch, but they are designed to deliver the goods, so it was a constant struggle to remain on budget while making sure the action quotient was there. Some larger setpieces

needed to be reimagined on a smaller scale, without sacrificing the spectacle—and yes, that’s as difficult as it sounds. Given that a good deal of the the film unfolds as a mystery, a lot of that intensity is generated through sequences geared as much toward suspense as toward spectacle, with reversals of fortune, betrayals and surprise reveals. The most important guidline was ‘fast and intense’—SyFy wants the story to move, to not stop to sniff the roses, to propel the audience through the story.”

On a creative level, one of the project’s more enjoyable challenges involved the titular monuments themselves. “There’s so much mythology about Stonehenge to pick through, and so much of it contradictory, that it became a case of picking the elements that best suited the story,” Abraham explains. “I’ve always been interested in ancient cultures and civilizations, and Stonehenge is one of those great historical anachronisms—something that shouldn’t exist, but does. Given the mechanics of the story I was provided with—that Stonehenge is a clock, and that clock has begun ticking—I gravitated toward the theory that some sort of ancient civilization was responsible, be it ‘Chariots of the Gods’ or the Atlantis myth. Having our hero be a fringe radio host gave ample opportunity to touch base on a variety of Stonehenge theories, and then narrow it down from there. Figuring out the mythology was really a case of making the plot mechanics easy for the audience to follow.”

Abraham, whose credits also include TV’s ROBOCOP: PRIME DIRECTIVES, currently has a number of other genre projects in development, the most intriguing of which is a cannibal comedy for First Sun Features called HELL FOR BREAKFAST.

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